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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to assist school systems in developing and/or using occupational/craft committees in support of public school vocational-technical education programs in Maryland. The guide is organized in two parts. Part I outlines the steps needed to organize an occupational/craft committee: rationale and benefits, functions, steps in organizing, statement of purposes, statement of organizational procedures, and notification of appointment. Part II describes the process of maintaining an existing occupational/craft committee: planning the annual program of work, planning and conducting meetings, agenda format, and the functions of an occupational/craft committee (community surveys, course content advising, student placement, community public relations, equipment and facilities, program staffing, program review, and community resources). The material in the guide was developed from information provided in two publications of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, published by the American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials: Module A-4, "Organize an Occupational Advisory Committee" and Module A-5, "Maintain an Occupational Advisory Committee." (KC)

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# OCCUPATIONAL/CRAFT COMMITTEES

## Guidelines for Organizing and Maintaining

## VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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October 1985



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## Preface

The number and degree of utilization of occupational/craft committees in support of public school vocational-technical education programs in Maryland varies from school system to school system. Some secondary and postsecondary schools have established responsive committees for each occupational program, while others have not. The purpose of this document is twofold as it provides quidance on the initial organization of occupational/craft committees as well as guidance on maintaining an existing committee.

This document is designed to assist school systems in responding to the following recommendation from the Guidelines for Local Advisory Councils on Vocational-Technical Education, published by the Maryland State Council on Vocational-Technical Education.

> **"PROGRAM AND CRAFT COMMITTEES**
>
> It is recommended each vocational-technical program have a special craft advisory committee composed of persons with expertise in that occupational field. Subcommittees shall be established to address specific occupational concerns. The membership of each local advisory council shall include representatives of local craft and program committees from all areas conducting vocational-technical education programs including the employment service."

The contents of Parts I and II of this document were developed from information extracted from the following publications of The Center for Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, published and distributed by the American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials:

Module A-4 Organize an Occupational Advisory Committee

Module A-5 Maintain an Occupational Advisory Committee

# PART I

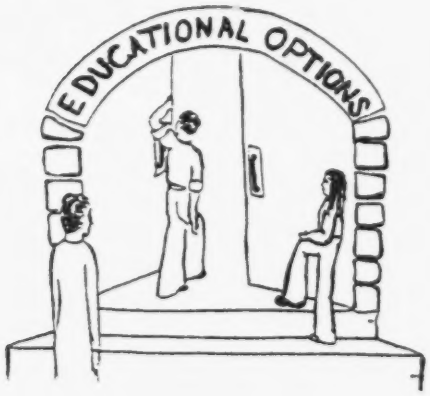
# ORGANIZING AN OCCUPATIONAL/CRAFT COMMITTEE

## Rationale and Benefits

An occupational/craft committee provides the public with an added assurance that community resources are being utilized. The committee serves as an organized base for two-way communication between the teacher and representatives from the community. This continuing forum allows the teacher and committee members to discuss their mutual interests and concerns regarding the instructional program.

The community will be better able to ensure that the students in their secondary and postsecondary schools will be equal to the challenges and opportunities facing tomorrow's adults.

An occupational/craft committee can assist by providing information regarding the specific instructional program. The committee can help ensure that the limited community and school resources will be used in the most effective and efficient manner possible. It can help ensure that current industrial and business practices and procedures are being taught rather than outdated ones.




Major efforts of a properly organized and operated occupational/craft committee generally are and should be focused upon benefitting the students. It should be evident, however, that the teacher, school, community, businesses, industries, agencies, and the committee members themselves will also receive benefits from strengthening the instructional program.

The students will benefit from having adequate educational options available to them. Their courses of study will be more relevant and enriched due to inputs from the occupational/craft committee. Services to students can be expanded as the committee assists with the community-based phase of the instructional program. And, students can receive recognition from the committee for outstanding learning performance.

The teacher will benefit from advice regarding new technology and its impact on the occupation in the field. Committee members often are able to provide assistance in obtaining new equipment and instructional supplies. They can also serve as resource persons (subject matter experts), assist with field trips, help keep the public informed, and assist the teacher in numerous other ways.

Benefits to the school and community result from the two-way communication between educators and citizens. The committee serves as an important forum for discussing school-community concerns. Because of committee activities, the community is more likely to recognize that the school is attempting to fulfill the educational needs of the community.

Businesses, industries, and agencies in the community are potential employers of the graduates of the instructional program. These groups benefit by being involved in the development of relevant curricula. Through their participation, they can ensure that course standards are realistic and in line with current industrial practice.

The benefits to the committee members should not be overlooked. The leadership abilities of individual members may be developed through committee participation. Members provide a service to the youth and adults of the community through involvement in the operation of their schools. And, members can and should receive recognition from their fellow citizens for service provided to the community.

# Functions

To enable an occupational/craft committee to function properly, the relationship of the committee to the school system must be clearly defined.

The committee's role is purely advisory -- not administrative or policy making. The committee's function is to advise and assist on matters pertaining to the instructional program, not to direct the program. It must always be remembered that the cognizant board is the only legal and lawful agent responsible for policy decisions and administration of the school system or postsecondary institution.

The occupational/craft committee is usually a continuing committee, organized in such a manner that it will continue to operate when there is a change of teachers. Thus, the committee is truly a committee of the school system or institution and community rather than a "teacher's" or "supervisor's" committee.

Numerous studies of committees have been conducted. As a result, it has been possible to identify the functions and activities of effective occupational/craft committees. The following are examples of the functions and activities most often reported by effective occupational/craft committees.

Verify the need for instruction in the occupation (trade, craft) by:

- analyzing community surveys
- analyzing labor market studies
- identifying current and emerging career opportunities in the occupation
- assessing the employment status of graduates of the occupational program

Verify the content of the course(s) of study by:

- reviewing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes being taught in terms of the needs of potential employers
- examining the length of the course, the sequence in which the content is presented, and the time distribution within the course
- advising about the types of "live-work" or production jobs that have sufficient educational value
- recommending acceptable standards of workmanship

Provide the teacher with technical assistance by:

- interpreting new developments in the occupation
- making recommendations for opportunities to upgrade the teachers technical skills and knowledge through summer employment
- serving as, or arranging for, a guest instructor(s)
- arranging for inservice teacher training clinics and/or workshops

Provide service to the teacher and students by:

- advising on securing funding from outside the school sytem or institution to assist the teacher in attending professional and industrial meetings on the regional and/or national levels
- reviewing program budget requests
- arranging meetings between the teacher and representatives of business and industry to develop cooperative relationships
- assisting with the placement of students for work experiences
- helping students obtain part-time employment during the school year, and/or summer employment
- helping students obtain employment upon graduation
- recommending instructional supplies and equipment
- identifying current standards for new equipment
- recommending sources of securing charts, models, and other exhibits
- arranging for in-plant visits and other field trips

Provide service to the school and community by:

- assisting with long-range planning
- serving as speakers at civic clubs, open houses, and career days to tell the story of school-industry cooperation
- attending meetings to support vocational education
- participating in radio and television shows
- providing guidance/assistance to the teacher, counselors, and students
- assisting with the development of adult evening courses, apprenticeship programs, and on-the-job related instruction
- advising on programs to meet the needs of special students, both secondary students and adults

# Steps in Organizing

Effective occupational/craft committees are a result of carefully planned and implemented organizational procedures. A series of basic steps for organizing a committee has been identified through research. By following these steps, the teacher is most likely to ensure that an effective occupational/craft committee will be established. Although modifications of these steps may be necessary in a given community, the basic procedures are as follows:

**Assess the Present Situation**

A teacher must identify the chain of command in the school system or educational institution. Don't make the mistake of bypassing a person in the administrative hierarchy.

Talk with school administrators, teachers, and members of the community to discover the history and status of committees in the school system or institution. First, determine the attitudes of administators toward committees. If it appears that a favorable attitude exists, there should be little difficulty in organizing an occupational/craft committee.

If a negative attitude is identified, move forward slowly. Do not immediately ask permission to organize a committee: the answer may be a firm "no." It may be appropriate to start with an informal consulting committee--a group of citizens who meet with the teacher to assess the instructional program and provide assistance in keeping it up to date.

If an occupational/craft committee already exists, find out how it was organized and what it has accomplished. By so doing, you may identify deficiencies in the procedures followed when the committee was originally organized. These deficiencies may need to be corrected to strengthen the committee.

If it appears that no occupational/craft committee exists, check with members of the community, teachers, and school officials. Determine if a committee has ever been in existence. Sometimes committees that were not organized properly just fade away. If it is determined that an inactive committee does exist, steps may be taken to revive the committee, or if may be dissolved and a new committee organized.

Determine what other educational advisory committees exist in the school, community, and state. These committees may be able to provide assistance with the organization of the new committee, or the reorganization of a dormant committee.

**Prepare to Organize the Committee**

Be sure to inform the administrator (e.g., principal, director of occupational education, supervisor of vocational-technical education, department chairperson) that consideration is being given to the possibility of organizing an occupational/craft committee. Don't let the administrator be the last person to know what is happening; it could be very embarrassing and detrimental to your efforts.

Then, prepare a written statement of the rationale for having the occupational/craft committee in the school system or institution, and written statements describing the purposes of the proposed occupational/craft committee and the procedures to be followed in organizing the committee. The statement of purposes may be written in the form of a charter, and can be designed to serve as a proposed resolution whereby the school administration will authorize the establishment of the occupational/craft committee.

At this point, the teacher and administrators must decide whether it would be best to involve a small group of citizens and school officials. The purpose of involving this type of group should be to discuss the ways in which an occupational/craft committee might help improve the vocational program and relationships between the school and community. A strategy to be considered in forming an occupational/craft committee should be discussed. Hopefully, the meeting will result in the formation of a small group of people who will be given the task of developing a statement of purposes and a statement describing the procedures to be used in organizing the committee.

# Statement of Purposes(Charter)

The statement of purposes, or charter, establishes the legal framework within which an occupational/craft committee is authorized to work. This general statment should be relatively short. The details can be clarified in a statment of organizationl procedures.

A well-prepared statement of purposes presented in a professional manner will often have a strong positive influence on the attitude of the school administrator. A favorable attitude toward the presentation may enhance the chances for having the statment of purposes approved and, thus, for obtaining permission to establish an occupational/craft committee.

The statement of purposes should answer, in broad terms, the questions and concerns of the school administration. Typically, an adequate statement of purpose will be approximately one page in length. An example of a statement of purposes (charter) for an occupational/craft committee in a school system is shown in Sample 1.

## Sample 1

### Statement of Purposes (Charter)

The _____ ( fill in appropriate authority ) _____ on this ____th day of _____ 19___ authorizes the establishment of a continuing committee to be known as "The _____ Occupational/Craft Committee." The committee is to be organized and operated under procedures approved by _____.

The _____(fill in appropriate authority)_____ reserves the right to dissolve the _____ Occupational/Craft Committee at any time and for any reason.

The _____occupational/craft committee is not to be regarded as a substitute for any other form of citizen participation in school affairs. It is intended to stimulate and supplement other types of citizen participation.

The purpose of the _____ Occupational/Craft Committee is to serve as an extension of the _____ by providing advice and assistance to the supervisor and _____ teacher.

The _____ Occupational/Craft Committee is expected to contribute to the improvement of _____ education provided by the school system by such functions as --

- verifying the need for instruction in the occupation
- verifying the content of the course of study
- providing the teacher with technical assistance
- providing service to the teacher and students
- providing service to the school and community

By authorizing the establishment of the _____ Occupational/Craft Committee, the _____ pledges complete cooperation in the committee's work. The _____ Occupational/Craft Committee will be expected to operate within the guidelines set forth.

# Statement of

# Organizational Procedures

Each step in the suggested procedures of organizing an occupational/craft committee is designed to prevent misunderstanding among the parties involved (e.g., school adminstrators, the teacher and school supervisors, the committee members and the teacher). The school administrators will usually want to know what procedures will be followed in organizing the committee, and under what rules the committee will operate. The statement of organizational procedures can be thought of as a part of a "constitution," or set of rules, governing the organization and operation of the committee.

The clearly written statement describing the rules under which the committee shall be organized will serve as a base of reference for years to come. The occupational/craft committee should be a continuing committee, functioning as long as the instructional program remains in operation. As school personnel change, and as committee members change, this statement will ensure continuity in the operation of the committee.

The statement of organizational procedures should reflect the anticipated concerns of the school administrators. Most likely, the first concern will focus upon the question of membership on the proposed committee. The statement should clearly define the rules under which members will be selected, the types of individuals who will be nominated for membership, and the procedure for appointing and replacing members.

In addition, questions may arise in regard to financing the committee, the way in which the committee will operate, the role of the committee in making public announcements, the responsibility of the committee in making reports, and the process whereby the statement of organizational procedures may be changed. Each of these concerns needs to be addressed. Sample 2 is an example of the format and content of a statement of organizational procedures for an occupational/craft committee in a school system.

## Sample 2

# Statement of Organizational Procedures

**I. Name**

The committee shall be called the _____ Occupational/Craft Committee of _____ _____.

**II. Objectives**

The major objectives of the _____ Occupational/Craft Committee are the following:

A. To help revise, when necessary, the _____ curriculum.

B. To assist in determining the need for establishing additional courses as well as to advise schoool officers regarding the maintenance or elimination of certain courses from the _____ curriculum.

C. To aid in recruiting instructors with adequate academic and occupational background, professional attitude, and teaching ability to insure a strong and efficient faculty.

D. To address the student body on topics which will inspire the young men and women to elect training in the _____ occupations.

E. To offer advice and counsel in matters pertaining to:

- Instruction in the field of occupational information and fact-finding.
- Placement possibilities.
- Occupation extension instruction for graduates presently engaged in a _____ occupation (inservice).
- Adult education in the _____ occupations (preservice).
- Guidance, initial employment, and follow-up.
- Building and equipping facilities.
- Teaching materials, tools, and apparatus.

**III. Membership**

A. The committee shall consist of six members, five of whom shall be selected from among community persons involved in the _____ occupations; one serving ex officio representing the education institution.

B. Members will be selected by the educational appointing authority _____.

C. Each initial committee member will be appointed for a term of from one to three years. Such a staggered arrangement will assure experience within the membership.

**IV. Officers**

A. A chairperson, elected from within and by the voting membership, shall serve for one year. He/she shall preside at all meetings of the committee, work closely with school officials, plan agendas, and represent the occupational committee to other groups.

B. A vice-chairperson, elected from within and by the voting membership, shall serve for one year, and represent the chairperson in his/her absence.

C. A nonvoting school representative, i.e., vocational educator, shall serve as secretary. The secretary shall assist with agenda preparation, announce meetings, arrange for meeting facilities, and record and disseminate minutes and other pertinent information.

D. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary of the Occupational/Craft Committee.

**V. Meetings**

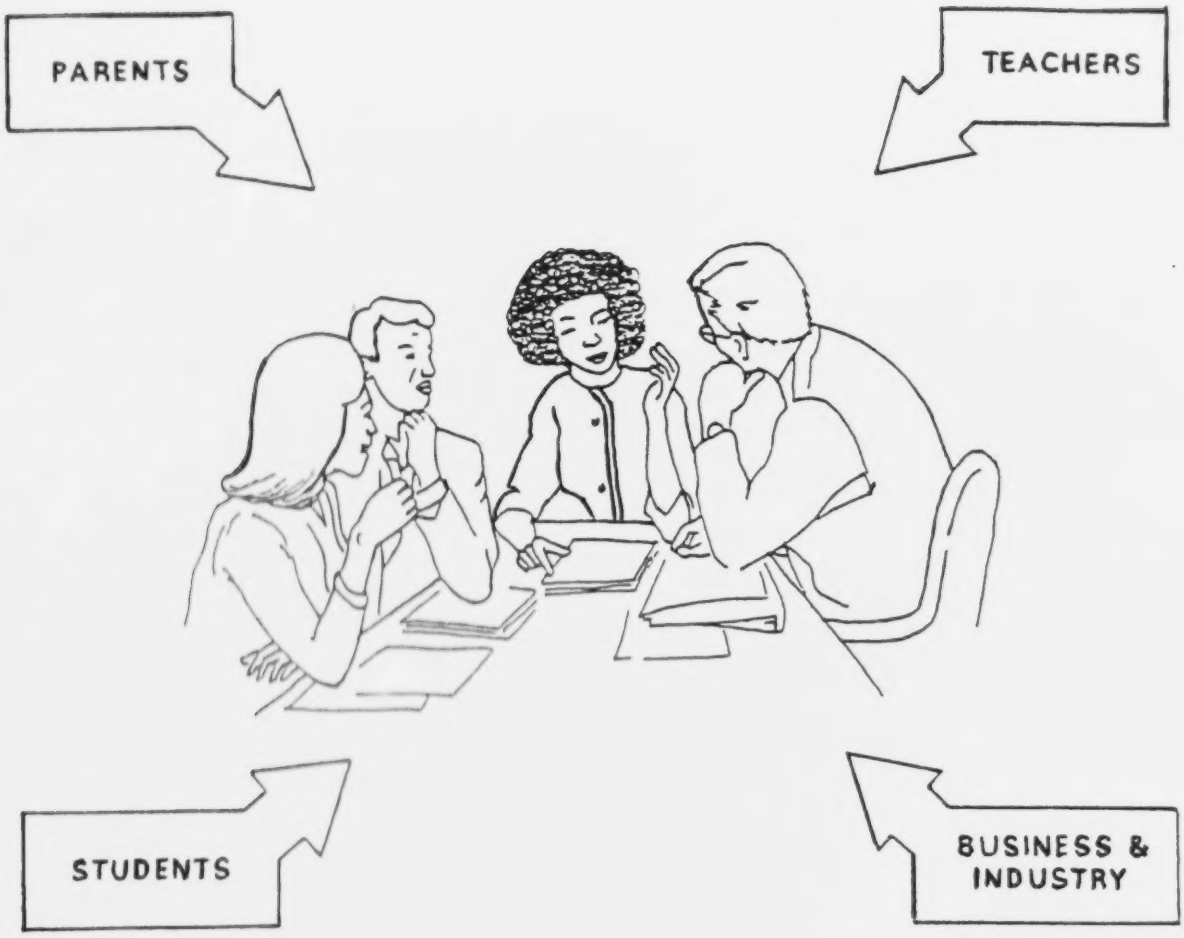
A. Regular meetings will be held on a monthly basis, the exact times, dates, and places to be determined by the membership.

B. Special meetings will be announced at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

C. A quorum will consist of 60% of the voting membership.

**VI. Occupational/Craft Committee Recommendations**

All committee proposals and/or recommendations concerning the operation of the _____ program shall be submitted to the appointing school authority for consideration.




# Notification of Appointment

The teacher should provide leadership to ensure that members of the committee are properly notified of their appointment. The statement of procedures for organizing the committee, approved by the cognizant administrative authority, spells out the procedure to be followed in appointing members of the committee.

After appointments of members and ex officio members of the committee are made, these individuals should be notifed in writing of their appointment. An official letter of appointment should be sent to each individual, over the signature of a representative of the school (supervisor, dean of occupational education, or principal). The teacher may wish to prepare a suggested letter of appointment and submit it to the school administration for approval. The letter of appointment will influence each committee member's attitude. The letter should be written in a professional manner and convey the message that the school administration views this committee as important to the maintenance and extension of quality programs of education. Each committee member should be made to feel important and should be encouraged to actively participate in the committee functions.

The letter usually identifies how the term of office of the newly formed committee will be determined. A paragraph describing the importance of the committee, including a plea for each member's active participation, may be included. A brief description of the steps to be followed in organizing the committee, and how the members will be notified of the time, place, and date of the first meeting should also be included.

# PART II

# MAINTAINING AN EXISTING OCCUPATIONAL/CRAFT COMMITTEE

A functioning committee will have a planned turnover of membership, and a change in officers on a periodic basis. New members and new officers must receive orientation to the role of, and procedures followed by, the committee. A committee handbook or manual is one effective technique to use in orienting new members and officers to their role and function. This handbook would contain a statement of the school's philosophy, the purpose of the vocational program, and the committee's charter, organizational statment, operating rules, and list of members.

In addition, the handbook should briefly describe the role and functions of the occupational/craft committee, the members, and the officers. The handbook will probably need to be revised occasionally as the committee matures and experience is gained. While the content of the handbook will largely be the work of the committee, the teacher probably will need to assume responsibility for its actual production.

## Planning the Annual Program of Work

An occupational/craft committee cannot accomplish in one year all the goals and activities that may be identified. In addition, special issues develop each year which may require the attention of the committee. It is essential for a committee to identify its goals and develop plans for accomplishing those goals over an extended period of time.

Long-range planning covering several years will help the committee coordinate its yearly activities. The major long-range goal should be to seek continued improvement of the occupational education program. Such an effort requires a systematic and continous program of assistance to the school and an ongoing evaluation of all major program activities. Aspects of the program which can be considered include: goals of the occupational education program, course content, placement for work experience, facilities and equipment, placement and follow-up of graduates, student vocational organizations, adult education, finances, community needs, and long-range program plans.

An effective occupational/craft committee will develop an annual program of work which reflects the committee's long-range plans. This plan of work for the year provides a guide for the allocation of the committee's time and resources. And, the annual program of work provides a bench mark for the committee to use when evaluating the year's accomplishments.

An annual plan of work will include selected components of the long-range plans as well as special issues to be considered during the current year. Not all special issues will be known at the time the annual plan is adopted. Problems and concerns identified during the year should be brought to the attention of the committee through items of business placed on the meeting agendas.

The teacher pays a key role in helping the committee members plan their annual program of work. The teacher should meet with the committee chairperson and help draft an annual program of work. The long-range plan, minutes of committee meetings, and any annual reports of the committee's activities can serve as useful guides when drafting the annual program of work.

The committee chairperson can call a meeting of the executive committee as appropriate for the purpose of reviewing the draft of the annual program of work. The proposed annual plan, approved by the executive committee, can then be presented to the committee for adoption by the committee as a whole at the first meeting of the committee's fiscal year. The adopted program of work will become the guide for planning the agendas of the meetings of the committee during the current year.

Occupational/craft committees can identify specific activities in which they desire to participate every year. Examples of these recurring activities include--

- planning an annual program of work
- participating in the annual parent-student banquet sponsored by the student vocational organization
- assisting with the selection of outstanding students
- publicly recognizing outstanding students
- assisting with the placement of students for work experience
- assisting with field trips
- assisting the teacher with the adult education program
- reviewing the equipment list
- submitting an annual report to the appointing authority and local advisory council on vocational-technical education

Reference should be made to the more complete listings and discussion of committee functions on pages 2 and 12-15.

An occupational/craft committee annual program of work might include the items in Sample 3.

## Sample 3

## Annual Program of Work

| Objectives | Activities | Dates |
|---|---|---|
| A. Maintain the committee | 1. Elect officers | September |
| | 2. Adopt an annual program of work | September |
| B. Ensure the instructional program is relevant and up to date | 1. Review the course of study | Oct - May |
| | 2. Establish acceptable standards for work performed by students | |
| | 3. Review the equipment list | |
| C. Assist the teacher | 1. Help identify work experience opportunities | July - August |
| | 2. Assist with field trip arrangements | Sept - May |
| | 3. Help place graduates for initial employment | May - June |
| | 4. Assist in the review of applications for student vocational organization awards | March |

# Planning and Conducting Meetings

Meetings of an occupational/craft committee can be classified as either annual, regular, or special. The **annual** meeting is the first meeting of the committee each year, usually in September. This is when the committee prepares for the year's work: officers are elected; last year's accomplishments are reviewed; a plan of work for the current year is adopted; and the dates, times, and places of the regular meetings are established for the remainder of the year.

**Regular** meetings are designed to carry out the annual program of work. The number of regular meetings may vary according to need, but as a general rule the committee should convene at least four times during the year --once every three months. A properly prepared annual program of work will ensure that a need exists for calling each regular meeting.

**Special** meetings of the committee are generally called when an unanticipated need arises, or when the members deem it necessary to meet more frequently than originally planned in order to complete the program of work. Special meetings should be called only when a real need exists.

The "rules of operation," or bylaws, adopted by the committee should specify who is responsible for calling the committee meetings. Usually the annual meeting and the regular meetings are called by the chairperson, but only after consultation with the other members of the executive committee.

The ultimate responsibility for planning each committee meeting rests with the chairperson. The teacher, however, should confer with the chairperson in advance of the meeting to discuss a proposed agenda for the meeting. Minutes of previous meetings and the annual program of work can be reviewed to identify items which should be included in the agenda. Special arrangements should be considered, such as inviting resource persons to attend or arranging to have background information for an item duplicated for each member.

Once the tentative agenda has been prepared by the chairperson, the rules of operation will often specify that the executive committee should review and accept the proposed agenda. In many situations, the executive committee may merely authorize the chairperson to prepare an agenda.

An occupational/craft committee will at some point need to obtain information from resource people; the committee members cannot be expected to know everything. A resource person may be able to give the committee an insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the work experience phase of the program. A staff member from the employment security office can explain the role of that agency in securing jobs for graduates. Recent graduates of the educational program are sources of valuable inputs regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional program.

All committee meetings should be conducted in a businesslike manner. Upon authorization from the committee chairperson, the teacher can mail notices of the meeting to the members and guests. A notice may be given to the school administration for transmittal to the news media. The first notice can be mailed about four weeks prior to the meeting date, along with a copy of the proposed agenda and any materials which the committee members should study in advance of the meeting.

It may be desirable to mail a follow-up notice approximately one week prior to the meeting date. Some teachers find a phone call reminder to the committee members on the day before the scheduled meeting to be very effective. This reminder notice and/or phone call can help ensure the largest possible attendance at the meeting.

The teacher should arrange for the meeting facilities through administrative channels. The committee chairperson, not the teacher, is responsible for actually conducting the committee meetings. The ability of different chairpersons will vary. The executive committee has a duty to assist each chairperson to ensure that the meetings are run effectively. The chairperson will have had an opportunity to discuss the agenda with the teacher, and possibly with other executive committee members, prior to the meeting. The chairperson will feel more comfortable having had prior inputs from these members of the committee.

It is recommended that the recording secretary for the committee be elected from among the citizen members. Regardless of who serves as secretary, the teacher is in a position to utilize the resources of the school for typing, duplicating, distributing, and filing materials for the committee. The citizen members of the committee usually do not have access to these kinds of services.

Each meeting of the committee should follow an approved format of activities. This format can be reflected in the way in which the agenda is organized (see Sample 4).

## Sample 4

### Agenda Format

1. Call meeting to order (committee chairperson).
2. Take roll of members and guests present.
3. Read and accept minutes of previous meeting.
4. Review proposed agenda and accept additions or other changes.
5. Consider routine business matters such as announcements or reports.
6. Consider items of business most easily disposed of.
7. Consider major items of business, such as special items and program of work activities.
8. Plan for the next meeting.
9. Adjourn meeting.

Occupational/craft committee meetings are usually conducted in an informal, but controlled atmosphere. Discussion should be open and free, but parliamentary procedures should be followed whenever official action is taken. The members of comittees tend to function more effectively when the chairperson is able to lead the group in reaching consensus through businesslike discussion.

Strict adherence to parliamentary procedures may make the citizen members feel uncomfortable, and result in less than effective committee meetings. In some situations in which committee members are not experienced in committee work, the teacher may have to take the initiative in helping the group formulate and reach decisions. This should be done of course, without pressure or railroading tactics.

Communication among the occupational/craft committee, school administration, (principal, department chairperson, dean, supervisor of vocational-technical education, director of occupational education), and the teacher should be continuing and two-way. The committee should submit a copy of the minutes of each meeting to appropriate administrative authorities.

The committee should follow the channels for communication established by the school system. Official communications should be signed by the secretary and/or chairperson of the committee. The minutes of each committee meeting should, of course, be signed by the committee secretary.

# Functions of an Occupational/Craft Committee

The activities of most successful committees are centered around the functions of occupational/community surveys, course content advisement, student placement, community public relations, equipment and facilities, program staffing, program review and community resources. Each of these eight functions and related activities with which committees might aid you is discussed under the appropriate heading.

## COMMUNITY SURVEYS

A solid rationale for "why" a school should offer a particular program, and "what" should be includeo in the program, is essential for the successful institution of the program. Committees can play a major role in the planning and analysis of surveys which attempt to define program needs. The actual survey is usually conducted by vocational education personnel.

A major focus of a community survey is on questions relating to the job market, especially in determining the short and long-term manpower needs in relevant labor markets. When discussing the community survey design, the committee should first attempt to identify the major questions to be answered. These questions should aid in making decisions for establishing, updating, expanding, or discontinuing the program. Surveys are generally designed to obtain the following kinds of information.

- the number of people in a geographic area currently employed in a given occupation, the number currently needed, and the projected number for a set number of years (usually five years)
- the occupation(s) in greatest demand
- the jobs within an occupation for which training is needed
- the interest of young people and adults in training for selected occupations
- the need for supplemental training for people already employed
- the number of graduates from school occupational programs who might be accepted for employment in a community
- new areas in which training should be developed
- recommendations on the vocational programs to be expanded, discontinued, or established

When the committee meets to review and discuss the data from the survey, several topics need to be thoroughly discussed. First, what general trends are noticeable in the data? Secondly, does the data provide accurate and adequate information for making the necessary decisions? Thirdly, how can the data be presented so they are readily and factually interpretable? The interpretation and summarization of survey results are important committee activities.

Although projected occupational demand is a major consideration for establishing new programs, it is not the only consideration. A community survey usually contains additional factors, such as student abilities, community financial resources, population trends, and attitudes of parents toward the proposed programs, which may be considered essential. The community survey focuses on questions addressed to students, parents, and businesspeople. Information from these sources complements manpower information, and provides comprehensive information for all parties served by the educational program.

## COURSE CONTENT ADVISEMENT

Providing advice on course content is one of the eight recognized functions of occupational/craft committees. The primary concern of the committee in this area is the establishment of practices which will keep instruction practical and relevant. All phases of training should be reviewed periodically in order to keep the program occupationally oriented and up to date.

The committee can engage in identifying occupational competencies, developing goal statements for the program, and reviewing the performance objectives of the program. Each of these activities centers around ensuring the technical relevance of instruction. The committee can also offer advice concerning the relevance of course content to students. For example, does the course content provide the student with an entrylevel job skill? Does it provide an adequate basis for further education?

In giving advice concerning course content, the committee may examine the broader areas of --

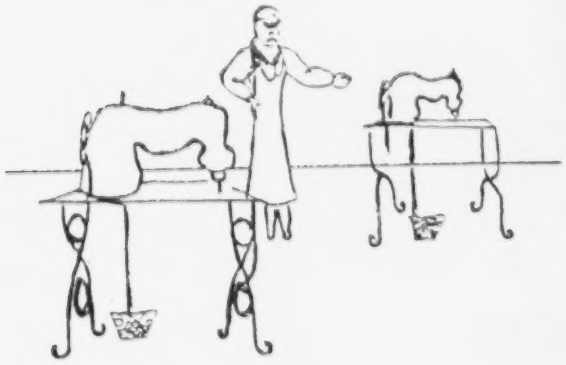
- occupational information included in the course
- employability skills such as interviewing skills included in the course
- emphasis given to human relations skills
- provisions for disadvantaged or handicapped students
- the relationship of course content to other courses in the curriculum
- the level of skill development
- the inclusion of information on further education
- the emphasis given to developing respect for tools/equipment/facilities
- evaluation of the students' experience in the course

The type of advice concerning course content provided by the committee or requested by the teacher should reflect the goals of the program. If the program goals are designed to provide for the total education of the student, the committee can provide valuable input for developing a program to meet all the students' needs.

## STUDENT PLACEMENT

In a society where "accountability" in education has become increasingly important, student placement is frequently used as one measure of the success of the vocational program. There are a number of activities through which a committee can assist in placing students. These include --

- organizing employer/student conferences
- notifying teachers or the school placement office of job openings
- reviewing student follow-up studies
- coordinating placement services with the state employment service and vocational rehabilitation service
- employing co-op students and graduates



## COMMUNITY PUBLIC RELATIONS

The public relations function of a committee involves its assistance in keeping lines of communications open between your program and the community. The committee can help develop community awareness as well as stimulating the interest of other individuals in vocational education.

Some possible methods of effectively utilizing the committee in public relations include --

- developing community awareness of the vocational facility and its equipment through an open house
- having members of the committee and vocational education personnel speak to civic and service clubs in the community
- developing a format to promote vocational programs through the newspaper, radio, television, and other media
- establishing an awards program for outstanding students
- providing input at board meetings
- planning participation in public funding activities
- providing feedback to special populations in the local community such as the disadvantaged, handicapped, and minorities.

Each of these is a critical activity which may have a significant impact on the way in which individuals in the community learn about the vocational program.

## EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

A continuing problem in vocational education has been the obsolescence of equipment and facilities. Through the leadership and the team efforts of vocational personnel and committee members, quality equipment and facilities may be secured.

One of the most important functions of an occupational/craft committee is its recommendations regarding equipment and facilities needed to provide students with the optimum learning environment. The best possible solution needs to be found to fully utilize the community and school resources.

The committee can be involved with this important function through --

- reviewing present equipment and facilities
- surveying equipment currently in use by industry
- analyzing projected industrial trends in regard to equipment utilization
- suggesting replacement of equipment
- advising on bidding procedures
- seeking equipment donations

## PROGRAM STAFFING

The administrative function of hiring qualified instructional staff can be supported in several areas by an effective occupational/craft committee. Of course, all final decisions as to the recruitment policies, criteria for hiring, and the final selection of an individual still rest with the recognized administrative official.

The committee can engage in the following types of program staffing activities:

- Review teacher selection criteria. -- Items such as the quality and quantity of experience, educational requirements, teaching certification(s), references, and the compliance of criteria with recruitment or hiring practices are appropriate.
- Suggest recruitment policy. -- Considerations might involve compliance with local contract, the availability of placement agencies, the services of placement agencies, and ethics relating to recruitment policies.
- Review teaching applicants and recommend potential candidates. -- The committee should only be involved in this function to the degree requested by the administration.

## PROGRAM REVIEW

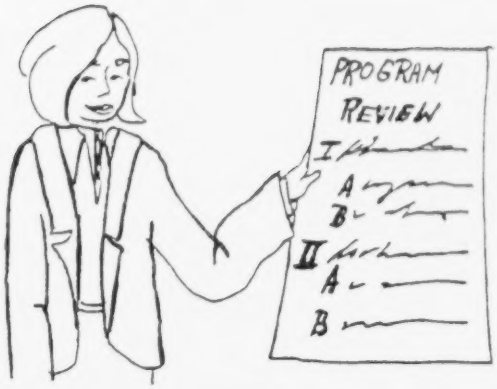
Program review is a critical function of the committee. It is not the responsibility of the committee to handle the complete evaluation of an educational program, but the committee's review can be a valuable aid in your program evaluations. Sometimes program review is the only function of the committee. However, most people view it as an umbrella function which takes in several other committee functions such as course content advisement and public relations.

Specific program review activities may include--

- recommending standards of student performance
- comparing program accomplishments with program objectives
- making periodic reports to the administration or school board
- formulating recommendations for program improvement.

Before the committee undertakes a program review, it should be told how the program review effort relates to other program evaluation efforts. Secondly, the committee needs to review all current and past documents relating to program evaluation, especially previously written local reports. Thirdly, program goals must be exactly identified if they are not already written down in an acceptable form. Fourthly, a data-collection instrument which focuses on the specific questions being addressed may need to be developed. This may not be necessary if the data for answering the questions are already available in a report or can be obtained by interviewing selected people.

From this point, the committee may go through a series of sub-processes such as drafting a tentative report, reviewing the report, formulating a final report, and approving the final report. The writing of specific




sections may be handled by a subcommittee of several members, with the rewrite and editing being handled by one person. The final draft is usually approved and signed by the committee chairperson and members. The final step involves presenting it to the official policy or decision-making body or person to whom it is addressed. The chairperson or members of the committee should be available to present and/or discuss the content to the groups reviewing the paper.

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Most committees attempt to identify community resources and to make them available in support of the vocational program. The committee itself should be considered a community resource because of its assistance in providing course content advisement, reviewing the program, etc.

There are several functions committees typically undertake in this area. Examples of these functions include the following activities:

- Provide input for field trips.--Field trips can be arranged through committee contacts for both students and educators. Open discussion of the purpose of field trips illustrates how students, teachers, and business all can benefit in some way.
- Recommend potential co-op or work experience stations.--Depending on the purposes of the program, work experience may be arranged for a day, a week, or a semester. Many industries will sponsor work experience programs for teachers.
- Identify personnel from business or industry.--The committee can identify persons who can provide in-school instruction and counseling on a variety of subjects and current practices. These activities have proven to be highly beneficial to students in group sessions or individual sessions.
- Assist in obtaining instructional materials.--The committee can help identify and obtain materials used in industry and company training programs. Often teachers are invited to industrial training programs or seminars through committee meetings.